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JPRS L/10708

3 August 1982

# Vietnam Report

(FOUO 11/82)



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## VIETNAM REPORT

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## MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

## INFORMATION ON VIETNAMESE MILITARY UNITS

[The following information on Vietnamese military units has been extracted from Vietnamese press sources published in Hanoi, unless otherwise indicated. Unit designators and subordination are as they appear in the original source. The remarks include a brief summary of the salient information available in the news item.]

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
N.13 Engineer Regt, 3rd MR 12th Co	Located in Hai Hung Province. Clears un- exploded ordnance. Working at projects in Nghi Xuyen and Ninh Giang, Hai Hung Province. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 9 Jun 82 p 1)
Vi Thanh National Defense Cement Factory, 9th MR	Constructed in 1978. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 9 Jun 82 p 2)
10th Gp, Artillery Forces	Photo of five unit howitzers. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 9 Jun 82 p 3)
Ho Chi Minh City Military Command 19 May Regt Gia Dinh Regt	Subordinate units commended for assis- tance in building local forces. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 9 Jun 82 p 3)
1st Bn, 19 May Gp	Commander: Captain Nguyen Hong [NGU- YEENX HOONGF]. Training activities re- ported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 9 Jun 82 p 3)
Hoang Lien Son Infantry Gp Sa Pa Infantry Regt A.16 Infantry Gp B.45 Infantry Gp Cam Duong Infantry Gp	Training activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 1)
Tailoring Enterprise 20	Commended for supply economy. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 1)
Enterprise 120	" " " "

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Enterprise 22

627th Gp, 9th MR

Coordinated with the 9th MR Economic Department in making plans for the road around the Mekong River Delta Technical Center. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 1)

H.94 AAA Gp

Photo of gun being moved into position. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 1)

B.06 Gp

Deputy Commander: Nguyen Mai [NGUYEENX MAI]. Commended for proper management of equipment. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)

Na Meo Border Defense Post 43

Located in Son Dien Village, Quan Hoa District, Thanh Hoa Province on the Lao-Vietnamese border. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 12 Jun 82 p 1)

Chi Lang Corps [Binh Doan]

Unit B.27  
Unit B.05  
Unit B.3  
Unit B.37  
Unit M.07

Constructs field fortification, produces construction materials. Self support farming, training activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 13 Jun 82 p 1)

Ha Tuyen Province Forces

Photo of unit armed with multi barrel rocket launcher. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 13 Jun 82 p 1)

98th Infantry Gp, Song Thao Corps  
[Binh Doan]  
18th Co

Improved discipline, self support farming reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 14 Jun 82 p 1)

Tay Nguyen Corps [Binh Doan]  
29th Signal Bn  
48th Regt  
-Ba To Regt  
4th Bn  
5th Bn

Colonel Dinh Dung [DINH ZUNG] an officer of this unit discusses discipline.

-consists of three battalions.

(QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 14 Jun 82 p 3)

H.88 Gp, "B" Gp  
7th Bn  
8th Bn

On the northern border opposite the Chinese. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 14 Jun 82 p 3)

B.95 Div

Deputy division commander makes on-the-spot corrections. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 14 Jun 82 p 3)

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B.72 Gp, Truong Son Corps [Binh Doan]	Youth Union member activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 14 Jun 82 p 4)
N.99 Regt	
30th Regt	
N.42 Regt	
4th Bn, 480th Artillery Gp, Quang Ninh Forces	Photo of 130 mm gun in action. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 15 Jun 82 p 1)
095th Gp, 7th MR	Photo of men leaving on pass. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 15 Jun 82 p 3)
29th Regt	Improvement in discipline noted.
-2nd Bn	-Commander: Le Huu Vuong [LEE HUWUX VUWONGJ] (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 15 Jun 82 p 3)
F.82 Gp	Assisted people in Thinh Duc Village, Bac Thai Province. (DAI DOAN KET 9 Jun 82 p 2)
B.12 Gp	Assisted people in Phu Binh District, Bac Thai Province. (DAI DOAN KET 9 Jun 82 p 2)
B.46 Gp	Assisted people in Bach Thong, Pho Yen and Dong Hy Districts, Bac Thai Province. (DAI DOAN KET 9 Jun 82 p 2)
T.29 Gp	"                    "                    "                    "
B.12 Gp	"                    "                    "                    "
12th Bn, M.73 Regt, B.33 Gp, 3rd MR 20th Co	Completes training of recruits who leave for new assignments. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)
B.21 Gp, Capital MR	Supply Officer commended. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)
127th Bn, H.46 Gp, Pac Bo Corps [Binh Doan]	Issued barber kits to subordinate units. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)
4th Military Hospital, Cuu Long Corps [Binh Doan]	Manufactures medicines. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)
Ground Forces Officers School #1	Provides canteen supplies for subordinate units located away from the school. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)
1st Bn	
5th Bn	
73rd Gp	

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2nd Co, 21st [or H.1] Bn, M.60 Gp	Conducts training on the border. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 10 Jun 82 p 3)
18th Navy Gp, Border Defense Forces	Serving in the south. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 1)
171st Bn, H.77th Missile Gp	Party building activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
Phu Xuan Gp, Binh Tri Thien Forces	Constructs unit housing. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
T.602 Gp	Constructs reservoir. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
Gia Dinh Gp	Increased sanitary facilities needed to accommodate large influx of recruits. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
H.99 Engineer Gp, Quyet Thang Corps [Binh Doan]	Recently upgraded quality of unit housing. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
M.92 Gp	Subordinate units include battalions. Constructs 45 water points and 114 bath houses for unit. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
69th Gp, 9th MR	Training recruits. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
103rd Military Hospital	Brick production reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 11 Jun 82 p 3)
2nd Bn, B.21 Gp, Capital MR	Commander: Captain Nguyen Ngoc Van [NGUYEENX NGOCJ VAWN]. (HANOI MOI 26 May 82 p 2)

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## MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

## INFORMATION ON VIETNAMESE MILITARY UNITS

[The following information on Vietnamese military units has been extracted from Vietnamese press sources published in Hanoi, unless otherwise indicated. Unit designators and subordination are as they appear in the original source. The remarks include a brief summary of the salient information available in the news item.]

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
2nd Bn, Military Administration School, Tay Nguyen Corps [Binh Doan]	Photo of tactical training. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 16 Jun 82 p 1)
Quyet Thang Corps [Binh Doan]	Maintains tight inspection system. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 16 Jun 82 p 1)
Quan Tien Phong Div	
Dong Bang Div	
Chien Thang Div	
H.99 Brigade	
H.02 Brigade	
Tat Thang Artillery Brigade	
Song Lo Regt	
Vinh Dinh Regt	
Ba Vi Regt	
Thu Do Regt	
Bac Bac Regt	
Trieu Hai Regt	
16th AAA Bn, Dong Bang Div	Commander: Tran Quang Duy [TRAANF QUANG ZUY]. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 16 Jun 82 p 3)
Border Defense Post 833, Ha Tien District, Kien Giang Province	Commended for attention to duty. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 16 Jun 82 p 3)
Border Defense Post 827, Ha Tien District, Kien Giang Province	" " " "



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Border Defense Post 825, Ha Tien District, Kien Giang Province	Commended for attention to duty. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 16 Jun 82 p 3)
T.93 Gp	Elements of this unit are located in Ha Tien District, Kien Giang Province. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 16 Jun 82 p 3)
066 Gp	" " " "
14th Regt, B.65 Gp, Truong Son Corps [Binh Doan]	Participating in construction of the Song Da Hydroelectric Power Plant. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 17 Jun 82 p 4)
7th Co, B.69 Gp, Quang Ninh	Photo of mortar crew. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 17 Jun 82 p 3)
H.88 Regt 7th Bn 8th Bn	Serious problems with discipline reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 17 Jun 82 p 3)
10th Bn, Political-Military Officers School	Scores well on firing range. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 17 Jun 82 p 3)
B.06 Div, Huong Giang Corps [Binh Doan] 16th Bn 1st Gp 2nd Gp M.01 Gp	Promotes fruit, vegetable cultivation. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 18 Jun 82 p 1)
Factory 59, Technical General Department	Overcomes material and personnel shortages. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 18 Jun 82 p 1)
9th Co, Van Hai Gp, Quang Ninh	Photo of men constructing beds. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 18 Jun 82 p 3)
7th Bn, H.88 Gp	Located at an altitude of about 1000 meters. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 18 Jun 82 p 3)
4th Co, 2nd Bn, S.7 Gp	Located on the border. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 18 Jun 82 p 3)
47th Military Hospital, Quang Ninh	Produces medicines. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 1)
03 Signal Gp, 3rd MR	Solicits help of local population to prevent theft of communications wire. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 1)

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Lam Son Air Force Gp	Photo of mechanics servicing aircraft. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 1)
B.91 Gp, Truong Son Corps [Binh Doan] N.8 Regt N.22 Regt	Construction activities in subordinate units reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 1)
11th Truck Transportation Regt, N.71 Gp, Rear Services General Department 52nd Bn 57th Bn 964th Bn	Uses gasoline sparingly. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 1)
B.70 Gp	Applies improved road surfacing tech- nique on Central Highlands highway construction. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 2)
11th Regt, B.19 Div	Economic construction work at the Pha Lai Thermoelectric Plant. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 2)
4th Bn, N.29 Gp	On the northern border in Tay-Nung tribal territory. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 3)
B.50 Gp	A Bac Thai Province unit. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 21 Jun 82 p 3)
Truong Son Corps [Binh Doan] 79th Gp 17th Regt 35th Gp	Subordinate units work on construction of Chi Linh-Pha Lai railroad. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 22 Jun 82 p 1)
Factory 01, Technical General Department	Insures availability of spare parts for vehicles and weapons. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 22 Jun 82 p 2)
Depot 205, Military Equipment Department	Unit personnel commended for honesty by members of Capital Military Region. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 22 Jun 82 p 2)
Song Giang AAA Gp 1st Bn 4th Bn -3rd Bn	Commander: Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Huy Canh [NGUYEENX HUY CANHR].  -Commander: Nguyen Dang Hoang [NGUYEENX DAWNG HOANGF]. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 22 Jun 82 p 3)

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**Factory Z.755**

Located in Ho Chi Minh City. (QUAN DOI  
NHAN DAN 22 Jun 82 p 3)

**11th Regt, 319th Div**

Working at the Pha Lai Thermoelectric  
Power Plant site. (XAY DUNG, No 6,  
Jun 82 p 33)

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## MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

## INFORMATION ON VIETNAMESE MILITARY UNITS

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<u>Unit</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Factory Z.53	Photo of personnel assembling a press. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 23 Jun 82 p 1)
Van Hai Gp, Quang Ninh 71st Bn, H.69 Regt	Recently held mustering out ceremony for men who had completed service. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 23 Jun 82 p 1)
98th Infantry Gp, Song Thao Corps [Binh Doan] 3rd Co 5th Co 11th Co 12th Co 18th Co 24th Co 8th Bn 9th Bn	Training activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 23 Jun 82 p 3)
M.16 Gp, 5th MR	Self support farming activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 23 Jun 82 p 3)
B.55 Gp, Song Thao Corps [Binh Doan]	Commended for finance management. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 Jun 82 p 1)
Station 66, Education Management Department, VPA General Staff	Provides political instruction for field grade and general officers. Self support farming activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 Jun 82 p 2)

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Song Gianh AAA Brigade	Deputy Commander for Technical Affairs: Senior Colonel Nguyen Van Thai [NGUYEENX VAWN THAIS]. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 Jun 82 p 3)
Bac Bac Regt, Quan Tien Phong Div Tank Co	Photos of men performing maintenance on tanks and trucks. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 Jun 82 p 3)
1st Regt, B.91 Gp	Bulldozer operator commended. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 Jun 82 p 3)
18th Signal Bn, B.25 Gp	Training activities reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 24 Jun 82 p 3)
7th MR Tay Ninh Province Song Be Province Lam Dong Province	Holds staff command post exercise for local force command and staff officers. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 1)
B.26 Gp	A front line, combat ready unit. In- sures that troops make good use of free time. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 1)
21st Co, 01 Navy Gp	Serving in Kampuchea. Involved in patrolling for intruders. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
7th Co, 3rd Bn, Song Lo Engineer Gp	Unit mechanic commended for maintenance of GSP vehicles. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
11th Co, 4th Bn, H.14 Gp	Constructed housing and equipment shel- ters at new location where it has been for at least past 5 months. Photo shows that armament includes twin barrelled guns. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
H.88 Gp, Quang Ninh Forces	During past 4 months has constructed 220 new structures and repaired 180 existing structures for itself. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
Engineer Bn, B.38 Gp	In 3 months of 1982 constructed 40 troop shelters totaling 800 square meters and repaired 10 vehicle shelters. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
Tam Dao Regt, Tay Nguyen Corps [Binh Doan]	Unit vehicles sheltered in 60 shelters totaling 960 square meters. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)

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Border Defense Post 2, Dac Lac Province	Located on the border with Kampuchea. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
44th Bn, Quang Trung Missile Gp, Ho Chi Minh City	Photo of men laying cable. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
5th Co, Thanh An Gp, "T" Corps [Binh Doan]	Unit executive officer commended. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 25 Jun 82 p 3)
T.41 Gp, Ministry of Interior	Photo of unit members receiving Youth Union membership cards. (TIEN PHONG 22-28 Jun 82 p 1)

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## MILITARY AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SECURITY

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<u>Unit</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
11th Bn, M.368 Artillery Gp, 5th MR	Photo of reconnaissance squad leader fixing on a target. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 26 Jun 82 p 1)
B.81 Gp, Thai Binh Province Local Forces	Assigned coastal defense responsibilities. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 27 Jun 82 p 1)
Thuan Hai Province Border Defense Forces Post 754 Post 746 Post 742 Post 714	Commended for good relations with local residents. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 27 Jun 82 p 1)
B.92 Infantry Regt, Quang Ninh Forces	Conducts infantry weapon marksmanship train- ing. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 28 Jun 82 p 1)
26th AAA Gp	Assigned to dam construction in Kim Son District, Ha Nam Ninh Province. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 28 Jun 82 p 2)
Tan Nguyen Corps [Binh Doan] Dong Bang Div B.1 Div H.34 Regt 4th Regt 56th Regt H.4 Regt N.2 Regt 22d Regt	Discusses discipline in subordinate units. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 28 Jun 82 p 3)

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6th Co, 2d Bn, M.98	Defending the border. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 28 Jun 82 p 3)
Hao Dao Artillery Gp, Quang Ninh	Conducted practice fire on tank, bunker targets. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 29 Jun 82 p 1)
Unit B.71	
Unit B.72	
Unit B.80	
Unit B.90	
Unit C.91	
B.14 Gp, 2d MR	Training activities, construction of field reported. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 29 Jun 82 p 1)
Unit T.28	
Unit T.18	
Unit T.81	
Unit T.66	
B.2 Div	Stationed in a mountain area. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 29 Jun 82 p 3)
N.2 Regt	
M.38 Gp, 5th MR	Photo of fire team in training. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 30 Jun 82 p 1)
231st Transportation Bn, 230th Transportation Regt, 5th MR	Compiles outstanding transportation record. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 30 Jun 82 p 1)
14th Gp	Located on the northern border. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 30 Jun 82 p 2)
H.77 Missile Gp	An officer: Major Nguyen Hong Luong [NGUYEENX HOONGF LUWOWNGJ]. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 30 Jun 82 p 3)
171st Bn	
N.84 Regt, B.32 Gp, 3d MR	Assisted people of Kim Thanh District, Ha Nam Ninh Province with dike construction. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 30 Jun 82 p 3)
31st Regt, B.79 Corps [Binh Doan]	Located in Kampuchea. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 30 Jun 82 p 3)
7th Bn	
6.P Gp, P.T. Corps [Binh Doan]	Photo of infantry patrol crossing floating foot bridge. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 1)
B.13 Gp	Located in a border area. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 1)
M.48 Regt. 3d MR	Working on the Chi Linh-Pha Lai railway section. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 1)
1st Bn	
2d Bn	
3d Bn	
4th Bn	
5th Bn	



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T.81 Gp	Has a mission in a forward position. Cultivating 4.5 hectares of sugar cane. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 1)
5 Aug Navy Hospital	Sent team to treat personnel on Bach Long Vi Island. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 1)
M.81 Gp, Thai Binh Province Local Forces	Harvested 131 hectares of fruit. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 1)
N.20 Gp, Engineer Forces Tam Dao Regt Lam Son Regt Me Linh Regt	During the past 3 years among other tasks constructed an airfield in a mountain area where the winds blew from the west. Also prepared the worksite for a construction project. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 2)
T.69 Gp, 9th MR 24th Bn 28th Bn	Recruits of 11 battalions of this unit scored well on the firing range. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 1 Jul 82 p 2)
Truong Son Corps [Binh Doan] B.65 Gp B.73 Gp B.91 Gp N.32 Regt N.85 Regt N.17 Regt	Works on improving quality of personnel. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 2 Jul 82 p 1)
Truong Son Corps [Binh Doan] Unit 35 Unit 79 Unit 17 79th Regt 14th Bn, B.65 Gp	Subordinate units working on the Pha Lai-Chi Linh Railway section. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 2 Jul 82 p 1)
Rear Services General Department Depot 212 Depot 205 Depot 215	Subordinate depots achieve high rate of packaging. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 2 Jul 82 p 1)
N.71 Gp, Rear Services General Department 11th Regt 12th Regt	Subordinate units conserve gasoline. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 2 Jul 82 p 1)
M.8 Regt	Maintains good relationship with local people. (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 2 Jul 82 p 2)
49th Regt	Self-support farming reported (QUAN DOI NHAN DAN 2 Jul 82 p 2)
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HEALTH EDUCATION AND WELFARE

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE IN VIETNAM DESCRIBED

Hong Kong ASIaweek in English 25 Jun 82 pp 28-29

[Article by Burt Sharp, M.D. and Jack Kent, M.D.]

[Text]

*Late last year three California physicians mounted the first American collaborative health study with Vietnam since that country's reunification in 1975. With the blessing of the U.S. State Department, which supports such "humanitarian" contacts despite its trade embargo against Hanoi, the trio visited remote reaches of the interior to study and help alleviate a high incidence of goitre. The three, all endocrinologists, were led by Dr. Jack Kent, former chief of endocrinology at the Long Beach Veterans Hospital and a member of the three-year-old U.S. Foundation for Scientific Cooperation with Vietnam, which helped arrange the ten-day visit. With him were Dr. Burt Sharp, assistant professor of medicine at the University of California at Los Angeles, and Dr. Jerome M. Hershman, UCLA professor of medicine. Funded with a US\$20,000 grant from the Third World-specialising Reynolds Foundation of New York, the trip afforded a rare opportunity to examine Vietnam's health-care system from an American professional's perspective. In this article, Kent and Sharp share some of their observations and argue for a reconsideration of the economic quarantine that has hobbled Vietnamese aspirations for a more humane society.*

Since the fall of Saigon seven years ago, Vietnam has remained effectively isolated from critical Western resources by the U.S. trade-and-aid embargo. What little assistance does flow in is from a few charitable Western nations (mostly Sweden and France) and from the Soviet bloc. Of necessity, then, the Vietnamese have had to pursue limited and basic goals. They simply cannot take chances because they cannot afford to lose. Their health system clearly reveals this attention to the basic and attainable. Through social discipline and spirited dedication, the Vietnamese undertake to keep their vow to provide free health care to everyone. This translates into an emphasis on preventive medicine — an emphasis which they believe to be central to successful nation-building. They even have written this concept into their founding documents. Vietnam, admittedly, did not invent the notion. The preventive approach has long been promoted by international health agencies (such as the WHO) as most applicable to the problems of developing nations. The method, in short, stresses the ABCs of public health — education, sanitation and immunisation — over the elaborate medical technology of wealthy societies.

In briefing us, the director of the health centre at the Phuong Cong commune on the Red River outside Hanoi enumerated what she felt were the country's most important achievements.

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She was proud that 81% of the commune's 849 households had toilets and that 218 households had wells. She pointed out the high percentage of children who had been immunised against polio, diphtheria and other preventable diseases. She even had figures on other aspects of communal health, such as the yearly population growth rate (1.7%) among the commune's 4,100 members (287 more females than males) and the customary techniques of contraception — mostly late marriages and condoms, though intra-uterine devices were used by 11.8% of women of childbearing age. The health workers' next mission was to bring care directly to each family through home visits.

Health care in Vietnam is provided through an extensive network of medical and surveillance units which stretch from the commune to the district level, then to provincial headquarters and the nerve centres in big cities. Efforts to control infectious diseases such as malaria, dysentery and tuberculosis are coordinated through all branches. Expert knowledge and scarce technical material are provided by the Ministry of Health. Although the system is multilayered, through persistent dialogue and exchange of staff between local and central sections, administrators try to resist the tendency towards over-centralisation with its notorious risk of losing sight, amid all the plans, of actually delivering the "goods."

If success is measured by attainment of charted goals, no matter how modest, the Vietnamese seem to be succeeding fairly well in maintaining their momentum towards improved health. Statistics (admittedly those available are meagre and rudimentary) indicated to us that there has been a significant decrease in the incidence of all the big "killer" infections (malaria, dysentery, etc.) as well as a reduction in dreaded diseases such as polio, diphtheria, plague, and infant and maternal mortality. Social disorders such as drug addiction, crime and prostitution also have been reduced. These achievements are most impressive in the north where the public health network has been 28 years in the making, compared with only seven years in the south.

The Vietnamese readily admit they need better epidemiology and statistics. Again, they have to make do with limited resources and technologically handicapped scientists. With respect to malaria, their No.1 killer, for example, the results of a nationwide survey show that in 1975 the incidence of the disease (as defined by a single positive blood smear) was 15% in the south compared with one-tenth of 1% in the north. Three years later there had been some improvement in the south, but the incidence was still a depressing 10%. Tuberculosis was reported at a 2% incidence in the south, 1% in the north. Other infections still more prevalent in the south include cholera, typhoid fever, plague and rabies. As for moral delinquency, in 1980, records assert, there were 15,000 opium addicts in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) — down, we were told, from 150,000 in 1975. Physicians and health officials claimed that the prostitute population in the southern metropolis had been reduced proportionately—a claim that seemed to be borne out by our sighting of scarcely any "hookers" on that city's streets. We visited the Institute for the New Woman in Ho Chi Minh City where former prostitutes are rehabilitated and prepared for socially productive lives. They stay for stints of at least six months. The women looked healthy, cheerful and friendly. How many longed for more "working" time on the streets, we couldn't say, but most were

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destined to return to their rural origins away from the temptations and "freedom" of city life.

Since the early 1970s, a surveillance program has identified those regions with a significant incidence of endemic goitre (thyroid enlargement). Worldwide, this disorder is quite common among populations who have iodine-deficient diets, who feed on plants grown in iodine-depleted soil, and who lack access to salt-water fish.

Goitre results from impaired manufacture of thyroid hormones essential to fetal brain development and general well-being. A high prevalence of goitre is associated with cretinism (a form of congenital idiocy) and with weakness and poor performance in daily functions. We were told of one village in some mountains inaccessible to us where thirteen cretins had been found among 1,200 peasants surveyed. It seemed a heavy burden on an already poor society to have 1% of its population from birth forward as a permanent drain on scarce resources. For comparison, consider the reaction in some of the most developed countries to the "burden" imposed by their handicapped.

The Vietnamese have sought to prevent hypothyroidism and cretinism through goitre-prevention programs. Iodine is added to salt using a makeshift wooden mixing trough. The iodised salt is then distributed to high-risk populations, most of whom live in mountainous terrain. Despite the elemental technology that must be employed, a marked decrease in the number and size of goitres is evident. We reviewed the results of one such program in the district of Hoa Binh, a rural mountain province 240 kms. southwest of Hanoi. We stayed there for two days. The commune (Dich Giah) that we surveyed was off the beaten visitor path and had been selected for us solely for its high incidence of goitre. Altogether in Dich Giah and in Van Con (another commune closer to Hanoi), we examined more than 1,500 people. We obtained urine and blood samples from subgroups for analysis in the U.S. We were able to confirm that health workers had markedly lowered the incidence of goitre in Dich Giah from an alleged 72% in 1972 to 26% today.

**D**espite this success in Dich Giah, many other regions of the country either had not yet received iodine-supplemented salt or received it only sporadically. Both transport vehicles and gasoline to fuel them are scarce. Whatever motor vehicle may be available often is the only one around. Replacement parts and maintenance expertise may not be obtainable. We all saluted our dedicated driver who somehow had the necessary spirit and skill to hang on to the driving wheel even while fording mountain streams that had washed out our roadbed. He was even up to cleaning debris from the carburetor by sucking water through jets.

There is no question that the U.S.-imposed economic embargo is hurting Vietnam, aggravating the pre-existing conditions that partly, at least, had been brought about by direct foreign intervention. One doesn't have to be an economist to "read" this out of the deficiencies of every variety of material and technology necessary to keep the economy running; a diverse but consistent assortment of everyday observa-

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tions told us that the economy was in serious trouble. Take paper, for example--ordinary writing paper the little available was was tan-coloured. Why? Simply because bleaching agents had to be imported. Whatever the priorities for Vietnam's very limited hard currency, bleaching agents were not very high on the list.

The economic squeeze has also prompted cannibalisation of machinery for essential spare parts. A U.N. economic adviser in Hanoi told us that only 25 locomotives were functioning out of the 125 potentially available in Vietnam. His comments were consistent with what we had learned from a West German engineer who was teaching Vietnamese mechanics how to repair imported German locomotives. "How can I teach them with the simple tools they have to use?" he asked us. We were surprised to learn from our U.N. acquaintances that American wheat was reaching Vietnam via the U.S.S.R. Just as surprising was the observation that some of this wheat was being consumed as unleavened bread. Why? Because of a shortage of yeast. Fortunately this problem would be rectified if the plan of one U.N. adviser for increasing yeast production is approved and implemented.

**D**eficiencies also compromise life-sustaining health services. We met with Prof. Ton That Tung, Chief of Surgery at the Viet Duc Hospital in Hanoi. He performs sophisticated liver surgery for removal of primary liver carcinoma (a common malignancy in Vietnam). For these operations, he must rely on reused and hand-patched gloves. Antibiotics are scarce and often not available. The hospital is unheated. Equipment tediously gathered from diverse external sources generally is unusable for want of spare parts.

The Vietnamese health workers seemed undaunted despite such adverse working conditions. Somehow they have advanced the health of their fellow countrymen through campaigns that demand careful planning, spirit and dedication. They are controlling malaria, dysentery, plague and venereal diseases. As for programs requiring scarce foreign exchange -- not just for expensive new drugs and high-powered technology, but for basics such as the penicillin needed for treating streptococcal infections which otherwise can lead to rheumatic fever -- these barely get to the drawing board.

We found our hard-working Vietnamese health colleagues to be succeeding within the limits of their resources. It was not difficult to discern, however, that the nation is at a critical juncture. Investment capital and credits must, somehow, be obtained to be coupled with the popular imagination and will if development is to continue. There is a limit to how much can be accomplished through spirit alone. C

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